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CITY IMPROVEMENTS AND CIVIC PRIDE.

Absence of a local civic pride in a non-resident property owner, contrary to qualifying them to remonstrate, against or petition for a change of quality of an improvement, same as resident property owners, is one point that might be urged against the South Bend-Ft. Wayne street improvement bill introduced in the legislature Tuesday by Senator Summers. The bill was prepared by the city attorneys of the two cities and introduced at their request. Aside from this one point it looks like a wise measure.

Under the old law, sought to be amended, it has been construed that only concrete foundation could be used for paving, thus creating a virtual monopoly for concrete manufacturers. The new bill admits of open specifications, allowing the use of gravel or other material, such as the board of works or affected property owners, may, by proper resolution or petition, specify.

Also under the old law 50 per cent of the assessed valuation of a piece of property had to represent the maximum cost of an improvement. The new bill allows three-fourths of the abutting property owners, by petition, to authorize the board to make improvements that cost the equivalent of the full value of the affected property.

Again, the old law does not permit the city to grade a street and assess the expense against abutting property without also paving the street. This bill permits grading without paving. The city may grade and curb, or grade without curbing, or curb without grading—sometimes a very desirable thing to do especially in an outlying district.

The only point of criticism is that of allowing non-residents to join in the petitions or remonstrances, either with regard to foundations, or change in the quality of an improvement. From a monetary standpoint, and in adherence to the principle that decries "taxation without representation," justice would seem to demand that the voice of these non-resident property owners should be heard, and yet without a civic pride, and only a monetary interest to consider, they might still prove strong enough to upset a very desirable improvement, or change the quality of it, very much to the chagrin of the people who have to live in the vicinity of that improvement.

The interests of these non-residents, as a rule, are purely of an investment nature. They care naught for the welfare of the community, in general, but only to collect their rents and reap their returns. Ordinarily they will not wish to spend an unnecessary cent, while those who live here, and have to tolerate the situation, may want something in the particular locality that is extra fine, or more indisputably permanent.

We hardly anticipate that the criticism will defeat the measure. The point may not be raised in the legislature—but here it is for the consideration of the people of South Bend, and for the administration to ponder over, for whatever it may be worth.

SENATOR OWEN'S REMEDY FOR PUBLIC UNREST.

Sen. Robert L. Owen, of Oklahoma, needs to be congratulated for his devotion to a cause, incident to his address, Thursday, before the Indiana assembly. Coming into Indiana on the heels of the recent defeat of the proposal of a constitutional convention, and flashing into the face of the legislature the well-known arguments for the initiative, referendum and recall, as reasons why the issue should be revived, illustrates the kind of persistence that people sometimes need to be made of, to overcome a popular prejudice, even though it may have accomplished nothing more.

But if we read the reports of the senator's speech aright, and note the punctuations by applause, apparently the issue, at that, is not yet dead. That he had an appreciative audience, even the stand-pat newspapers are admitting. Evidently there are still men in the legislature who have not been snowed under by the fact that the people, favorable to a new constitution, lost out in the battle for a convention that was waged last fall. There is a bill before the house now, literally calling a convention without an advance referendum vote. Sen. Owen may have helped this bill a bit, or he may not, but the legislature was afforded some light on new constitutions, and constitution making.

But new constitutions aside, we wonder if it is really true what Sen. Owens said about the initiative, referendum and recall, making the people supreme in the affairs of government. Would it really have a tendency to do, what he says it would do and has done, where it is in vogue—serve to quiet the public unrest? We have generally been taught to suppose that it results exactly opposite. He says it is the minority rule, such as exists at present—the government by a sort of ruling class,—that is responsible for the unrest of

the majority. To give the people, he declares, the virtual direct reins of government, serves to quiet rather than to excite their nerves; their natural sense of responsibility acting as a sort of balance-wheel. We agree with him that responsibility in the individual, very frequently has a very quieting effect, and since the whole is but the sum of all its parts, it might work out quite the same in the affairs of state.

Anyhow, we Americans like to talk about government by the masses, and majority rule, and all that sort of thing, which is decidedly ideal, and so far as we know, real enough in-so-far as it has gone. At least, we have not taken very many backward steps during the years that have gone, since the sovereignty of the individual began its political development. Our last step has been the election of United States senators by direct vote, and though twenty years ago it was condemned as pernicious, no one is worrying now about its proving a failure.

AUTOCRACY OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

If it was ever intended, at the time the law was passed under which boards of works of the second class are organized, to invest in such boards the power of arrogance, someone must have blundered. Up to the present time we had supposed that the law merely intended to vest in the board a mere power of independence. If complaints voiced against the present board, voiced by the members of the common council at their meeting Monday night, count for anything, it would seem that this proffered independence has developed into a sort of oligarchy.

We have commented upon this same indisposition of the board to regard the wishes of the councilmen at least, on several occasions before. Then it was only the democratic members of the council that were being snubbed. We are glad to note that the "citizen" members are also beginning to feel the sting. Maybe this will serve to bring the little autocratic body to its senses.

For be it remembered that the common council is elected by the people. Its members are directly responsible to the people. While perhaps they cannot compel the board of works to do a thing, they are the representatives of the people, and are entitled to a courteous hearing. The board of works is constituted merely of favors shown by Mayor Keller, perhaps in return for political support, or perhaps not, but at the most they are merely his proxies. It occurs to us that perhaps the mayor might see to it that some of the autocracy of these official creatures of his be overruled. The people still have some rights that Mayor Keller and his boards ought to be bound to respect.

A resolution from the common council regarding a public improvement, or a public necessity, comes as nearly from the people as representative government ordinarily affords, and we thought that our "citizen" administration was to "serve the people."

THE COST OF RENT.

The editor noticed this week in an exchange, a pathetic plea, evidently signed by some man who was out of work, for some kind of employment. The writer thereof said that the cost of rent had so increased as to prevent working people from accumulating any savings for use in such need as has resulted this winter from the European war.

In many places the landlord must now pay twice as much as formerly to get a house painted. Plumbing, papering, and mason work are similarly costly. It is only to be expected that the mechanic should now be asked to pay a largely increased rent bill. Social economics must give a great deal of thought to the question of how a comfortable home can be provided working people at a moderate cost. A man working on \$15 a week ought not to have to pay more than \$12 a month for rent. Yet the letter referred to stated that the writer thereof earned but \$12 a week in good times, yet had to pay \$15 a month for his rent.

In many places cheap wood "three decker" tenements are the favorite means of housing work people inexpensively. These are often of the most flimsy construction, and may constitute a fire risk and also injure the appearance of a city. Some social reformers say the solution is to be found in blocks of connected houses. Possibly this is the case, though it reduces light, air, and comfort to an extent that seems needless except in the larger places.

If people would acquire the habit of living farther in the outskirts of a town, and depend more on walking to work and social pleasures, they should be able to balance the higher cost of building by the lower cost of land.

The habit of living in the outskirts makes room for gardening, and gives the children healthful life. To many of us, such a home would look far better than a tiny flat or crowded block.

"BUILD NOW."

A wise suggestion to help the unemployment situation is made by The Manufacturers Record and it appears to be producing practical results.

It is often observed that the gravest problem may have the simplest solution.

The Record's slogan, which is being rapidly adopted in many sections, is "Build Now," the idea being that all improvements that have been planned for the near future be carried out as soon as possible.

While this would result in immediate and immeasurable benefit to the unemployed, its basis is not charity but business.

The man who builds now gets the advantage not only of the low prices of building materials but also of the low price of labor.

Dealers in building materials in Cleveland, O., have announced a considerable reduction in prices to all who will build now. Building trades firms in Augusta, Ga., have united in an advertisement of reductions from 10 to 25 per cent. In many cities the movement is gaining headway.

It is an idea which should particularly apply to all municipal public works. This is the basis of the extensive movement in New York city. There is nothing that smacks of charity in this, nothing of socialism in it; it is simply sound business.

Missouri's legislative commission announces that \$8 per week is the minimum wage upon which a working girl can live and that thousands of them are existing on \$4.50. It is a \$3.50 distinction between living and existing, you see.

It is just one merry holiday after another, for the Old Boy. War has made fish so scarce in northern England that they're talking of cutting two days of fasting out of every week in Lent.

In view of the general opinion that this nation should be better prepared for war, the small boy is already practicing marksmanship on the windows of the neighbor's woodshed.

The ground hog will soon make his annual trip out, but not by the front door at which the farmer's boy has prepared the shiny steel trap with a bright red cheeked apple.

Some people are going to all the dances now because Lent is soon coming, and after it comes they will keep dancing because they need the recreation.

The new president of Mexico doesn't seem to wear any necktie, but Pancho Villa will no doubt be glad to provide him one in a few weeks.

Greece orders all her reservists in Canada to join their colors by March 1st. Sounds as if Greece were going to baste Turkey.

The discussion in congress is nearly as intellectual as the intercollegiate debates.

Statesmen Real and Near.

By Fred C. Kelly

WASHINGTON, Jan. 28.—With one exception Oscar Underwood is called by his first name often by any other congressman. He is a man of quiet dignity, but it is not the kind of dignity that says "Hands off!" or that requires the prebiking of Mister Oscar not only takes no offense when his associates call him by his first name, but really prefers that they do so. After he moves over to the senate he will not care a continental whether he is addressed as senator or not. Just Oscar is good enough for him.

We have already noted an exception. There is another member called by his first name even oftener than Underwood. If you were to try to guess the name of this man you would probably hit on somebody who has been in congress a great many years. And right there is where you would go wrong. For the man referred to has been here only one term, and will retire on March 4 next. Robert H. Gittins of Niagara Falls is the man addressed oftener by his first name. Anticipating your question, it may be stated that Gittins is called Bob by nearly every one in the house, simply because he calls most of the others by their first names.

And do not get the impression, simply because Gittins has been here less than two years and calls everybody by his first name, that he is a fresh young person. He is a mixer, and he likes human beings. Having a kindly feeling for everybody he meets, he falls naturally into the way of using first names as a sort of lifeline to open up the stove of acquaintance.

Gittins has had an odd career. He went to work when he was 13 years old as a clerk in a lumber yard at Oswego, N. Y. At the age of 27 he was still a clerk, a quiet, law-abiding, trustworthy young man, who had the respect of all who knew him.

If he had any serious vices no one suspected it. He was about the last fellow in Oswego that anybody would have thought capable of going off on a tangent the way he did. In fact, if anybody had told what was taking place in Gittins' mind, everybody would have come to Bob's defense and declared that it simply wasn't true.

And nobody was more startled or more worried than Gittins' father when he heard from his son's own lips what he was planning to do. Bob came home from work one evening, seemingly in excellent spirits, and ate his supper with apparent relish. Then as he reached for a toothpick, he faltered:

"Father, I've got it into my head that I want to be a lawyer. In a week or two I shall quit my job and go away to a law school."

For a moment or two the father

THE MELTING POT

COME! TAKE POTLUCK WITH US.

It is the wise weather man who occasionally consults the almanac.

WE do not blame Quillhot. Had we done what Quillhot did we should have exercised whatever right we had to refuse to testify. That right, as we understand it, is that no man can be compelled to incriminate himself.

BETWEEN Mr. McNutt of the Grand Trunk and Mr. McNitt of the Vandalia there is no more difference than between u and i, except that they represent different railroad systems.

THE light of the sun makes the earth a glad place for the bugs and the beasts and the old human race, for it happens so rarely in this moist climate of ours that it lends us relief from snowfalls and showers. A sunny day is something to keep alive in our minds and dream in our sleep. It makes the long winter endurable when without it 'twould be little comfort for men.

L. C. E.

L. C. E. expresses a thought that comes often to us, that in our deeper natures we are butterflies, rioting in the sunshine and glooming in the gloom. Yet for a large portion of the year we are grubs, grubbing out an existence under the shadows.

The Noes Have It.

(Cor. Ft. Wayne Journal-Gazette.) A surprise party on Mabel Noe was given Saturday evening, Jan. 23, in honor of her birthday anniversary, by her schoolmates at her home. Mr. and Mrs. Paul Noe visited with Mrs. Noe's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Biddle of Ligonier, Saturday night and Sunday.

Mr. William Noe had the misfortune to lose a horse last week, death caused by colic.

NOBODY denies that John D. Rockefeller has done a large amount of good with the quarter of a billion of dollars he has given away, nor does anybody commend the manner in which he acquired the riches which make such a magnificent benevolence possible. What the rest of the world would like is a better distribution in order that it may for a part of the time at least vary the monotonous role of beneficiary by playing benefactor.

THE way the stage attractions are jumping on South Bend this week is a caution to income tax collectors and a boost to the h. c. of l. They seem to think South Bend has a potful of money and each is trying to get her first.

THE little old News-Times seems to have brought a hectic flush to the cheeks of certain senators who abhor having the spotlight of publicity thrown upon the proceedings of the legislature. They would like to choke the press, but the press is unaccommodating, it refuses to be choked.

was too shocked to make any reply. Then in a tone of compassion he began:

"Robert, I have always endeavored to bring you up the best I knew how. You are now 27 years old, and I supposed you were past the age when your mother and I need worry any more about you. I have always thought you were industrious and taking an interest in your work. What has come over you?"

Bob swallowed hard and started to defend his course, but the words stuck in his throat.

"Most young men of your age," went on the father, "are married and thinking about educating their children instead of talking about leaving their positions and going off to college themselves. I suppose now you'll be coming home with queer clothes on and a mandolin under your arm."

Gittins' mind was made up, however, and nothing that his parents or the neighbors said could sway him from his course. He resigned his clerkship, went and has his life insured, borrowed a little money on the policy, and worked his way through law school. He not only became a lawyer, but did time in the New York state senate before coming to congress.

Shortly after he had been elected to congress Gittins spent a day in his native town of Oswego, partly for the purpose of receiving the plaudits

Back to the Woods.

You ask what I want, what I long to do next. You think that your question, will leave me perplexed: Well it won't, for I want to go back to the woods. To Hawkins you bet, with its right neighborhood. To the timber is right, where the work is some hard. Oh! laugh if you will and say I would rue— But I tried it one winter and weathered it through.

I fell for the drifts, and each wind that did blow. Never a day when 'twas not ten below. Giant maples fell toward the hill and the sea. Forming a beautiful picture for me. Backward and forward the crowscut we drove. And went without water, 'twas freeze in the jug. But Dad and we lads made a plumb dandy crew. When I tried it that winter and weathered it through.

We camped in the woods near a little brook bed. Made home every week with the old lumber sled; How the splinters and dust would bother us all. As we rode from the job on the old lumber haul. We smoked and made merry mid the clanking of chains. And the woods took the echo and sent back refrains. Yes the city's all right but I'm telling you

The best place is Hawkins, I've weathered it through.

It hurts when you leave it to mix with the throngs. It's tough to remember the skids and the tons; That's why I'd go back to that old timber town. To grasp an old ax and bowl timber down. So you see when you ask what I want to do next. I can answer you girl, for I'm never perplexed; Oh! I'd sure pull stakes if it wasn't for you. And blow back to Hawkins, and weather it through.

H. F.

THE Kaiser's birthday was celebrated by renewed activity along the Yser. The Kaiser's birthday is something to die for, but we don't know what.

As long as the treasure holds out to burn The ambitious Mex. will take his turn.

C. N. F.

of those among whom he had grown up to mature manhood. The first person he met after getting off the train was an old man who had known him from the day he was born. This old man called him to one side and began to whisper:

"Bobbie," he said, "I've often wondered about your case, and I want you to tell me something. Did you quit that good job you had here for your own accord, or was you fired?" (Copyright, 1915, by Fred C. Kelly.)

FUNK LOSES HIS POSITION?

Rumored That He is No Longer With Rumely Company.

LAPORTE, Ind., Jan. 28.—It is the general belief that Clarence Funk, president of the Rumely Co., is no longer connected with the Rumely interests following the appointment of a receiver. No official confirmation of this report could be obtained at the Rumely office in Laporte Wednesday. In view of the fact however that the receiver is to have a salary of \$50,000 a year it is not considered reasonable that another \$50,000 a year man should also be retained. This was the salary that Mr. Funk received. Those in a position to judge say that it is extremely improbable that Mr. Funk will be retained.



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Talks on Temperance

By JAMES C. KELLY

INTEMPERANCE is a human frailty. It is a sure indication of the triumph of greed, vanity, jealousy or some other primitive instinct over the intellect.

Intemperance thrives amid ignorance. The demagogue always leads a mob of lower average mentality than his own. Ignorance, bigotry and greed are the crooked politician's best cards. Injustice and graft, or both, are the inevitable result of intemperance.

Intemperance is the ancient enemy of civilization. It denominates broadly all the blind alleys along the road of progress. Since the beginning of history, intemperate wars or intemperate persecutions have been annihilating the fruits of civilization just as the present conflict is devastating Europe.

Both national culture and individual greatness are founded upon true temperance. The faddist may shine amid his brilliant stage setting but the scenery is quickly shifted. Fortunate, indeed, is he if his effort wins him a scant paragraph in history. The zealous uplifter may forcibly command obedience, but, the excitement over, he finds instead of his dream of adoring conformance, a horde of scoffing enemies, who glory in his failure.

Temperance in the individual indicates not only brains, but culture. Just as intemperance has its own penalties, temperance brings its own reward. It means confidence and friendship instead of distrust and enmity.—Adv.

If the theorizing Prohibitionist was compelled to work in a steel mill, grind shop or a stuffy factory, preferably in the hot summer months, then and there a miracle would happen to him. He would learn that in the long day's grind the modern galley slave needs a mild stimulant to sustain him—to bridge him over to meet another day.

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